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August 9, 2012

Willie J. Hagan
Interim President
California State University Dominguez Hills
1000 E. Victoria Street
Carson, CA 90747

Re: WASC Interim Report

Dear President Hagan:

At its meeting by conference call on June 17, 2012, a panel of the Interim Report Committee convened to consider the Interim Report submitted by California State University, Dominguez Hills. The panel appreciated the opportunity to discuss the report with Provost and Vice President Ramon Torrecilha; Vice President Enrollment Management Sue Borrego; Vice President Administration and Finance Mary Ann Rodriguez; Associate Vice President Academic Resource Management and Planning and ALO, Janna Bersi; Vice Provost Academic Affairs Mitch Maki; Acting Assistant Vice President Academic Programs Sheela Pawar; and Associate Vice President Student Success William Franklin. The conversation was exceptionally informative and helped the panelists better understand the substantial progress your institution has made in addressing the areas cited in the Commission's letter.

The panel found the report and its many detailed attachments to be exceptionally thorough in documenting how CSUDH has addressed the Commission's recommendations. The panel found that the institution has taken the process very seriously and has used the occasion of this report both to implement and to document many key functions at the institution. In particular, the panel wishes to note its observations in each of the following areas:

- 1. Assessment of Learning in Academic and Co-curricular Units:** The panel found the response to the Commission's concerns in this area to be well beyond minimal. The evidence was copious; it was accompanied by the clear sense that the institutional activity reflected in the evidence had been planned carefully and implemented extensively. The panel noted the degree to which attention to students' co-curricular learning experiences was given a prominent place in the institution's strategic planning processes, budgets, and assessment strategies. The work of the University Advisement Center in providing comprehensive supports for student learning was seen as a valuable component of these efforts. In the academic arena, the departmental examples of program reviews and assessment reports demonstrate that the results of these reviews are in fact

being used to improve academic programs. The institution's initiative to bring in assessment experts as consultants in both academic and co-curricular areas to work with faculty and staff is also commendable. In future reviews, teams will want to ensure that these efforts are being sustained as part of the institution's culture. (CFRs 2.3, 2.4, 2.6, 2,13)

2. **Linkage of Assessment Results with Strategic Planning:** The panel was, again, impressed with the scope and detail of the information provided that portrays the institution's response to these recommendations of the Commission. In particular, the panel noted the benefits to the institution of creating both an academic and an enrollment management component to the strategic planning process. Broad institutional engagement, including with the President's Cabinet, in the creation of these plans has helped the institution achieve many of the intended outcomes from this process. The specific recommendation that assessment outcomes be linked to the strategic planning process has been significantly achieved. The panel concluded that these processes are ongoing, faculty-driven, linked with the academic calendars, and embedded with the academic culture through integration with key institutional committees. (CFRs 4.1-4.3)

In view of the continuing budget constraints at CSUDH, together with several key personnel changes at the institution, the panel recognizes that sustaining these multi-phased efforts around assessment and planning will not be easy. The report, however, speaks of additional faculty hires and new academic programs in a setting of hiring freezes and uncertain funding. In this context, it is essential that these core academic goals not slip to a lesser position in institutional priorities. The panel advises that the institution review its planning and assessment activities with a view to keeping them simple and viable, balancing sustainability with effectiveness. There is value in thinking of the Strategic Plan as a living document, more reflective of "strategic thinking" than of strategic planning.

The panel was very satisfied with the progress that CSUDH has made in addressing the two areas identified in the Commission letter. Continued resources for and support in all of these areas will be needed for CSUDH to sustain these critical endeavors and to ensure that student learning and success goals are achieved. Given the challenges presented by the decline in state funding, CSUDH will need to prioritize carefully and thoughtfully. The panel believes it is well poised to do so.

After careful discussion of the progress that has been made by CSUDH in addressing these areas, the panel acted to:

1. Receive the Interim Report with recommendations and commendations as noted above.

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The panel, again, reaffirms the hard work and important steps that CSUDH has taken to address these issues. I join the panel in wishing you every success as you continue to implement these well-conceived plans.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard Winn", written in a cursive style.

Richard Winn
Vice President

cc: Janna Bersi, Associate Vice President Academic Resource Management and Planning
and WASC ALO
Members of the Interim Report Committee